

REMARKS

Claims 23-31 are pending in the present application. Claims 23 and 31 were amended in this response. New claims 39 and 40 have been added. No new matter was introduced as a result of the amendments. Support for the amendments may be found, for example, in paragraphs [0045-48]. Entry of the amendments and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 23-28, 30-36 and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Alperovich (US Patent 6,101,393). Claims 29 and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Alperovich (US Patent 6,101,393), in view of Rooke (US Pub. 2002/0044634). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Specifically, the prior art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest features “wherein the message is transmitted by the service provider anonymously, and the service provider receives notification if the recipient wants to have the sender of the message put on a list of exclusions, the notification to the service provider containing a message identifier as an identification signal from which only the service provider can determine an identity of the sender, with the message identifier being a reference to a storage location of one of a message URI and a message identification element Message-ID” as recited in claim 23, and similarly recited in claim 31.

As explained previously, the present claims solve the problem of message screening (selective delivery of messages) in cases where the sender wants to hide his identity before the receiver. The claimed features describe the use of an alias name that replaces the sender's address or the hiding of the sender's address (i.e not displaying it to the receiver). Under one claimed embodiment, the anonymity of the sender is preserved, while allowing the recipient to exclude further messages by referencing a storage location of one of a message URI and a message identification element Message-ID.

These features are taught or suggested in Alperovich. Instead, the reference discloses a screening mechanism for selectively accepting and rejecting Short Message Service (SMS) messages. Located within the Public Land Mobile Network's (PLMN) Home Location Register (HLR), the screening mechanism determines the Mobile Station-Integrated Services Digital

Network (MSISDN) number (or other origin identifier) of an entity attempting to locate a particular mobile subscriber for the purpose of sending an SMS transmission (col. 1, line 60 - col. 2, line 2). The screening application compares the identifier to one of two lists stored in the HLR. The first of the two lists contains all MSISDN numbers from which SMS messages are to be accepted, and the second list contains all MSISDN numbers from which SMS messages may not be accepted. The screening mechanism is activated when the HLR is interrogated by the SMS Gateway Mobile Services Switching Center (SMS-GMSC) for the location of the intended SMS-message recipient. If the screening mechanism determines that the incoming SMS message is to be accepted, or alternately not rejected, then routing information is transmitted and the SMS message is delivered or remains buffered (col. 2, lines 3-23; col. 5, lines 22-50; FIG. 5).

Thus, Alperovich does not provide a mechanism for blocking messages sent anonymously using a message URI and/or a message identification element Message-ID. It is known in the art that message URI and/or a message identification element Message-ID is data that is generated after notification/delivery (see present specification [0044]). Applicant cannot find any disclosure in Alperovich that addresses these features.

Additionally, Alperovich fails to teach or suggest the features of sender identification related to the alias name that is only known to the service provider, where the service provider receives notification "if the recipient wants to have the sender of the message put on the list of exclusions, wherein the notification to the service provider contains the alias name as an identification signal" as recited in new claims 39 and 40.

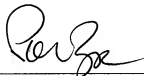
The Office Action alleges that using an alias under Alperovich would have been obvious in view of the fact that Alperovich suggests to use alternative names other than MSISDN or IMSI (col. 6, lines 15-20). Accordingly, the term "alias name" is being interpreted by the Examiner as being equivalent to the "origin identifier" disclosed in Alperovich. However, the MSISDN in Alperovich is, by definition, a user identifier along with the use of the IMSI. In the passage cited in the Office Action, the "other" origin identifiers include "group" or "type" identifiers that allow, for example, an organization to restrict users of specific groups to send and/or receive messages (col. 6, lines 7-20). In other words, the "other" identifiers are used to restrict message delivery in the first instance within an organization based on additional lists. In contrast, claims 39 and 40 address messages that are *already sent to a recipient*, where the recipient uses the alias

to block further messages from the alias name. While Alperovich discloses the updating of lists with regard to individual users based on the MSISDN/IMSI data (col. 5, lines 51-66), Alperovich does not teach or suggest excluding received anonymous messages based on an alias. None of the other cited references solve the deficiencies of Alperovich, discussed above. For at least these reasons, Applicant submits the rejection should be withdrawn.

In light of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections are traversed and that claims 23-31 are both novel and non-obvious over the art of record. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any additional fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Commissioner is authorized to deduct said fees from Deposit Account No.: 02-1818. If such a deduction is made, please indicate the attorney docket number (0112740-933) on the account statement.

Respectfully submitted,

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